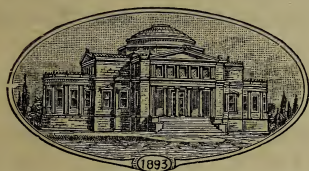


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**The JAMES BLACKSTONE  
MEMORIAL LIBRARY,  
BRANFORD, CONN.**

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*[The following has been prepared in answer to questions that are often asked.]*

The building was erected and the endowment provided in memory of James Blackstone by his youngest son, Timothy B. Blackstone. The former was born in Branford in 1793, made Branford his home, and died in Branford in 1886. The latter was born in Branford in 1829, was best known through his long and able presidency of the Chicago and Alton railroad company, and died in Chicago May 26, 1900. The old home is about two miles east of the center, a little west of the place where the Pine Orchard road crosses the railroad. Five generations of the family lived and died upon the farm.

The act of incorporation of the Library Association was approved March 23, 1893. The

foundations of the building were laid in the autumn of that year. The public exercises of dedication were held in the building June 17, 1896, and the building was thereafter open for use.

The marble came from East Tennessee; some of it has the especial excellence of brightening under rain. The outside dimensions of the building are 162 by 129 feet. The dome is marble, eight inches thick, with copper sheathing; the height of the dome from the floor is fifty feet. The building is fireproof throughout. The basement affords room for future development. The architect was S. S. Beman, of Chicago; the architecture is Ionic, the details being taken from the Erechtheion at Athens.

The painter of the pictures in the dome (representing the history of bookmaking) and of the medallion-portraits of American authors (Bryant, Emerson, Hawthorne, Longfellow, Whittier, Holmes, Lowell, and Mrs. Stowe) was Oliver D. Grover, of Chicago.

The portraits of James Blackstone and of Timothy B. Blackstone were painted by J. Colin Forbes, of Toronto. The bust of Timothy B. Blackstone was made by Mr. Grover; this was a gift from William N. Blackstone, of Norwich.

The building is open, except Sundays, from 8.30 A. M. to 9 P. M.

The library on the opening-day consisted of about 6,450 volumes. The additions in the past

twelve months have been 1,760, of which 126 were gifts; the net total is now about 25,000, but quality is sought rather than numbers. Additions are recorded in a bulletin issued every May; all the books are covered by the various catalogues.

The issue of books in the first twelve months was 27,240; in the last twelve months 64,977; from the beginning 583,336.

A branch was opened in Stony Creek in February, 1900; the issue there from the beginning has been 58,287.

Especial care is given to making the library helpful to the schools; deposit-stations have been maintained since January, 1907, at the Paved Street school and the Damascus school, with growing usefulness.

The number of cardholders is now 2,222. Temporary residents can have cards by making a deposit of \$3.00.

Over a hundred periodicals are taken for the main reading-room, and seventeen for the branch. Most of these are in due time bound and placed upon the shelves. Lecture-courses are carried on in the winter, with occasional concerts.

The administration is in the hands of six citizens of Branford and, ex officio, the Librarian of Yale University. The expenses are met by an endowment, and not at all by taxation.

The visitor will do well to notice especially:  
the excellence of the location;

the breadth of the front steps ;  
the columns, the tablet, and the lanterns in  
the portico ;  
the attic story over the portico ;  
the bronze front doors, weighing nearly 2,000  
pounds ;  
the mosaic floors, especially that of the rotunda ;  
the wainscoting, both marble and oak ;  
the fixtures for electric light ;  
the columns inside the building, marble or  
scagliola ;  
the egg-and-dart molding in many places ;  
the book-stacks and other shelves, and the  
room for extension in this respect ;  
the displays for children in the catalogue-room ;  
the reading-room and reference-rooms ;  
the art-books on the tables in the rotunda ;  
the color and polish of the marble in the  
back hall ;  
the lecture-hall (capacity 350), with special  
entrance from outside ;  
the staircase, unsupported on the inner side ;  
the view of the dome from the upper corridor  
of the rotunda: the "history of book-  
making" is seen at best advantage from  
this corridor; it cannot be seen well from  
the lower floor ;  
the art-rooms and their contents ;  
the views from the windows.

Those having leisure to read about the build-  
ing can borrow material at the counter.

*September 1, 1909.*